

[H. D. Stine]

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Wm. V. Ervin, PW; [Wichita?] Falls, Texas

Words 1,700

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INTERVIEW with H. D. Stine, Henrietta, Texas; pioneer resident of the Wichita Falls country.

"I came to the Wichita Falls country in 1875. There was not any town of Wichita Falls here, then but the falls in the Wichita River was still here, but they are not any longer.

"We were in the cattle business, and later in the sheep business, but the price of sheep got so low you couldn't get over twenty-five cents a head for them, which [wouldn't?] pay the freight. We gave our sheep to the sheepherder to get him to take them away, and he went on west with them and ran into loco weed with them and lostmost of them, and so he went out of the sheep business, too. We went to raising cattle again, and since then we have raised horses and farmed.

"I know Cal and Ike Suggs. There were eleven of the Suggses, but Cal and Ike were the only ones of them who could make a living, and they made fortunes out of the cattle business. Ike was not Ike Suggs' real name, which was J. D. He got the name of Ike when he was a boy because he liked to hear a lawyer by the name of [Icus?] make speeches so they called J. D. Suggs Ike for Icus. Ike said he knew it wasn't his real name, but he didn't know his real name was, all he knew was his initials.

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"It was like that then about names. I knew lots of men just by the brand they used, or represented, but I didn't know their real names. If anybody had asked me if I knew Flying A, I'd say I did; but if they asked me by his real name if I knew him, I wouldn't have known who it was. There was a man came into the country from Louisiana, and we all called him Louisiana, and that was all the name we knew. C. 12 - [????] 2 When he went to get married he asked for the license in the name of W. B. Frey, and they were not sure he was the right man.' I've had men work for me for several years at a time that I never knew their real names. They'd have nicknames, and we'd all call them by them. I had a man worked for me for three or years and all the name I knew him by was Foss. He went off and I didn't see any more of him for several years. Then one [night?] somebody rode up to the house one night and hollered and called me by name, and asked if he could stay all night. I said, "Is that old Foss?" He laughed, and said, "Yes, but I haven't been called that for five years. My name is Gus Ford." That was the first time I ever knew his real name. I had another feller worked for me that we always called [Martha?]. I don't know where he got the name, but that was all the name I knew him by until one day he asked me to call for his mail, and gave me the name of Mat Campbell. There was a letter for him at the postoffice when I called for his mail, but it had been carried around so much that it had worn open. I thought, well, I would be accused of opening it and reading it, anyway, so I thought I might as well read it. It was from his mother, and she told him that officers were after him, and for him to take another name and light out for unknown parts. I gave him the letter, but I didn't tell him I had read it. Pretty soon he left, which I knew he would, and the boys was all wondering why Martha had left so sudden, but I didn't let on like I knew. About five years later Martha showed up and wanted to work for me again. I put him to work on Monday, but by Saturday I hadn't had a chance to see him by himself, so Saturday evening I told him I wanted him to go with me and fix some fence. When we got away from the rest of the bunch I says, "Martha, I read that letter you got when you was here before, and after you left some Federal officers 3 come here looking for you. I thought I'd tell you, if you didn't want to stay around here in case the [officers?] came again. I never told anybody what was in the letter." He says, "That's all right. I went back home and stood trial for that

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and come clear. It was a case of bootlegging.” The next morning, though, when we got up Martha was gone—didn't even ask for his week's pay and we never saw him again. I reckon he was lying about standing trial and coming clear.

“Cal and Ike Suggs were good and bad, they were bad men to monkey with. Together, they killed nine men. They would waylay a man if they got it in for him. Cal said, “If a man's goin' to get killed anyway, why let him know about it beforehand?” Their niece married a man, and him and another man got to stealing the Suggses beef, and Ike come looking for them. He come to where the husband of his niece worked, but the man said he wouldn't be back till next year. Suggs said, “Well I ain't goin' to wait a year to stop him carrying' off my beef.” He killed the feller in a few days, and the other one skipped out.

“Cal Suggs like to have killed Burk Burnett, Powder-burned him. They had gone to Oklahoma to see about leasing Indian lands, and they happened to meet in the lobby of a hotel. Cal said to Burk, “I understand you got your lease money back from Washington.” Burk was a kind of a quick-tempered, rough-talking feller, and he says, “That's a lie, you [md;]!” Cal jerked out his gun and shot at Burk once, but he missed him—the powder burned Burk's cheek. Others there in the lobby took charge of them and quieted them down. Cal said later he had tried to shoot Burk between the eyes. They were kept apart always after that. Burk and his friends and family were afraid the Suggses would waylay him, 4 and I reckon they would have. When ever Burk had to go where he might run into the Suggses he took W. T. Waggoner or [Silverstein?] along, or both of them. He figured that the Suggses, who didn't have a [grudge?] against Waggoner and Silverstein, wouldn't start a shooting with two other [prominent?] cattlemen along. One time Burk was making a trip where he thought he might meet the Suggses, and he had [Waggoner?] and Silverstein along. He had told Waggoner why he wanted them along, but him and [Waggoner?] hadn't told Silverstein why it was. They met the Suggses all right, on the road. They figured the Suggses were waiting to waylay Burk till they saw who his company was. They come along in their buggy. As they went by Silverstein hollered at them and waved, and was about to pull up and stop, but Waggoner and Burk kept the horses going.

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When they got by, Silverstein says, 'Why, I thought we'd stop and talk awhile with Cal and Ike.' Waggoner says, "Don't you know why me and you are along? Don't you know there might have been a shooting if we'd stopped? Those fellers are out to get Burk."

"When I came out here there were not any [fences?]. It was all open, range. Some people wanted to fence in a little land before barb wire was made, so they tried hedges, but it didn't do very well for fence. One feller, though, he planted a bois d'arc hedge to fence in three or four sections, and it made a good fence, but it was a lot of work, [When?] the limbs would grow out he would turn down and sort of lace them back and forth between the [trees?] and that way he had a pretty solid fence which would hold cattle.

"When people started using wire fencing there was different kinds of barb wire. If you had to use more than all of one kind a store 5 had, you had to take a different kind, and so you were liable to have several different kinds of wire. I remember a couple of those kinds which would be funny-looking now. One was just flat metal with a barb cut in it. It would stop cattle all right when they learned it would hurt them. Another kind of wire had a barb that looked like a spur rowel.

"Fence-cutting started with the fencing because the cowboys figured that if a man could fence in his range, he wouldn't need more than a man or two to handle his cattle, and so most of them would be without work. But when they discovered that the cowmen needed about as many men to ride the fences and keep them up and to handle the cattle, they quit cutting the fences. One feller knew got his fence out. It was cut one each side of each post. Looked like some feller had something that he could cut with as he rode along on a horse. The man that owned the fence he just went around and wired it back again. They didn't bother me because I didn't have much fenced in.

"There were some shootings and killings over the fence-cutting before it was over with. There were also some disputes and killings over land lines. There were three brothers had some land joining a ranch, and they had a [dispute?] with the owner of the ranch about

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where the land line was. They went out to where two of his hands were building fence. The three brothers were in their wagon and each one had a shotgun laying down in the wagon. It looked like they were prepared for trouble. One of them, when they got to where the fence was being built, jumped out of the wagon and began pulling up apost. One of the cowman's hand whowas building the fence shot the man with a [Winchester?] and killed him. Them hekkilled the other two brothers before they got into action with their shotguns. 6 They fell out of the wagon, and the team got scared and ranto the home, where the men's mother and sister were. The mother and sister got in the wagon and drove over to where the men were shot. When they got there two of the men were dead, and the other said, "Turn me over. I'm shot in the back." Then he died. It was said the mother lost her mind. Well, it was enough to cause her to lose her mind to find her three sons there shot to death. The feller that did it was a pretty tough hombre. But he didn't deny any of it in his trial. [He?] came clear. One of thethree brothers had been a school teacher and [I?] had gone to school with him.

"The Indians had quit raiding down in this part of the country when I came out here. But some cattle stealing went on. The men athat were stealing cattle then were white men."